

Welcome to OUR TOWNS



Special Supplement • Kennebec Journal

Saturday, May 4, 2019



Augusta Art Walk set for May 17

BY AUGUSTA MAIN STREET
Special to the KJ

Calling all artists! The annual Augusta Art Walk is just around the corner, so if you are an artist looking to participate, please submit your art work to the Augusta Downtown Alliance by April 26.

Details for submission can be found at mainearts.maine.gov/Postings/Blogs/Detail/Call-for-Art-Augusta-Art-Walk-1.



The old Odd Fellows Hall on Water Street will undergo development to provide 30 new market-rate units.

First Opportunity Zone project in state to occur in downtown Augusta

After months of negotiations, GenX Capital Partners of Miami has closed on financing for the redevelopment of 333 Water St. in downtown Augusta. Located in the old Odd Fellows Hall, and purchased by Dirigo Capital Partners and Capital Area Properties last summer, this new development promises to bring 30 new market-rate units to Downtown Augusta, making it the largest project of its kind in the downtown area.

Financed through new tax incentives outlined in the Opportunity Zone program, a measure that allows reinvestment of capital gains into designated areas, this project represents a first for the state of Maine and is among one of the first in the country.

New restaurant to open on Water Street

The Oak Table and Bar will open this summer at 233 Water Street in Augusta.

The brainchild of Augusta area native, Eli Irland, a Portland-based chef, The Oak Table & Bar will feature a special rotating menu highlighting seasonal ingredients, along with a la carte fare and a full bar. Irland, is returning home with cooking experience in the Philippines, Los Angeles, Beverly Hills and Portland, Maine.

In 2014, Irland placed runner-up on the Food Network show, Chopped.



Elisha Irland, Chef/Owner of the upcoming restaurant on Water Street, The Oak Table and Bar.



Contributed photo
Gardiner welcomes enthusiastic gardeners to maintain city gardens and planters.

Get out and MIX! in Gardiner

BY GARDINER MAIN STREET
Special to the KJ

People are beginning to leave hibernation to venture downtown regularly once again. Gardiner expects to see a handful of new businesses downtown by the time summer emerges. The excitement of what is to come is contagious and has been drawing new people to Water Street. With so many new faces in town, Gardiner Main Street's monthly MIX! gathering has become a popular way for people to connect with their community. At a time when people are overscheduled and communicate mainly through social media, text and email, MIX! offers a refreshing change of pace.

This "after hours" event is a way for business owners, community members and volunteers to come together face to face to network and learn about what's happening in Gardiner.

For Gardiner Main Street, MIX! holds a significant amount of value. The opportunity to bring business owners together to discuss their successes as well as struggles and offer the chance to collaborate enhances the business-friendly downtown Gardiner is known for. This open event also helps the organization connect with members of the community who may not be reached on other platforms.

Having a network of volunteers is vital to the organization's success; furthering connections through MIX! helps bring in new volunteers that add a fresh perspective to ongoing projects. MIX! is hosted at a different location on the first Wednesday of every month from 5 - 6:30 p.m. Are you looking for the location of the next MIX!? Follow the Gardiner Main Street Facebook page or sign up for the weekly e-blast through the Gardiner Main Street website gardinermainstreet.org.

The Gardiner Main Street Streetscape Committee is deep into planning projects for the fair weather months with the goal of making Gardiner the most desirable place to visit, to work and to live. This committee is behind the 24 planters along Water Street each spring. More than a dozen volunteers (including store owners) water these planters almost every day. If you would like to help, or if you love gardening, volunteers are needed to help curate our public gardens and parks. Besides taking care of the planters on the street, volunteers tend to city gardens all over town. Other projects include painting rails at the Common and maintaining the historic fountain. To find out more about volunteer opportunities, e-mail info@gardinermainstreet.org.

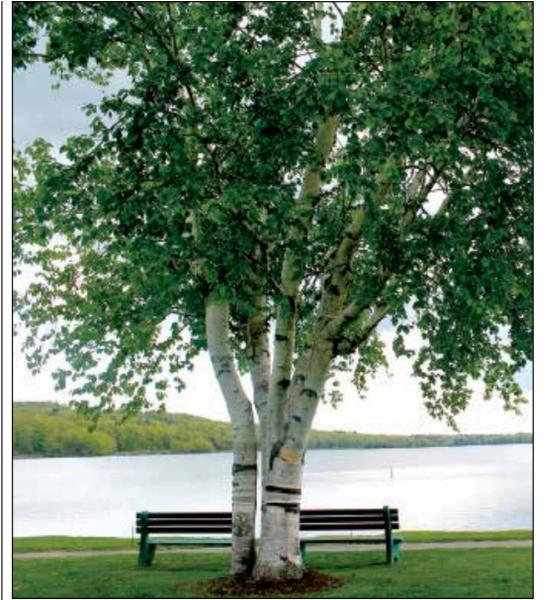
Greater Gardiner River Festival

Gardiner's annual free, family-fun community festival will be Saturday, June 22, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Highlights include an open-air craft fair on historic Water Street, live music and entertainment all day, active outdoor "field day" events for all ages, and the Gardiner Federal Credit Union Fireworks!

As the summer unfolds there are many events to enjoy, Johnson Hall Performing Arts Center kicks off summer festivities on the waterfront's main stage with its waterfront concert series on Friday evening, June 16 with musical performances and fireworks. The fun continues Saturday with the much anticipated Greater Gardiner River Festival which features arts and entertainment, games and giveaways, and local foods galore all taking place at the beautiful Waterfront Park set along scenic Kennebec River. In a day-long celebration on Gardiner's Historic Water Street and beautiful Waterfront Park, Gardiner Main Street present live music and entertainment on two stages, a craft fair, and activities for all ages on, near, and in the Kennebec River. The event is expected to bring thousands of visitors to the area.

Festival organizers have continued to find ways to celebrate life on the Kennebec River - both from land and from the shore. Most activities are free to the public thanks to the area's generous sponsors. Again this year, there will be several ways to get out on the river - from boat rides to Kayak and paddleboard demonstrations. Historic Water Street in Gardiner will be transformed into a pedestrian mall with artists, crafters, and specialty food vendors exhibiting their products from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Throughout the day, there will be entertainment and children's activities at Gardiner's Waterfront Park.



Contributed photo
Locals and visitors enjoy the lovely water views in Winthrop.

Winthrop region offers something for everyone

Special to the KJ

The Winthrop Lakes region is a great place to visit in the summertime. The many lakes, ponds, and streams provide a multitude of opportunities for boating, fishing and other recreational activities. There are also shops, eateries, historic landmarks, and festivals for those who prefer to stay on shore. Like other waterfront communities, the town of Winthrop's population doubles during the summer.

Winthrop was once home to the Winthrop Mills Company which, according to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, was one of the top manufacturers of woolen blankets in the U.S. Many residents were employed there. The Winthrop Mills Company Historic District has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Another landmark in Winthrop listed in the National Register of Historic Places is the Ladies Delight Light which is a small lighthouse on Lake Cobbosseecontee (one of the longest lakes in Maine). The lighthouse was erected with the help of two oxen transported to the island. The story is told that only one oxen could fit on the barge that was used to transport it. As the mariners went back to retrieve the second oxen, they reportedly found the first oxen swimming back to the mainland. (It was thought to be lonely for the other oxen). The mariners finally got both oxen there and the lighthouse was constructed. It's the only Maine lighthouse on a fresh water lake. It's been maintained over the years by the Cobbosseecontee Yacht Club.

While some people are interested in the history found in the Winthrop Lakes area, others are more interested in the lakes, ponds, streams, and the natural beauty of the region.

Winthrop is still home to a number of camps and lodging places today.

For those visitors looking for a nostalgic place to eat, Fast Eddies Drive-In Restaurant and Ice Cream Parlor (located on Route 201 in Winthrop) will revive a lot of memories. Burgers, fries, and homemade ice cream are served by a car-hop at the drive-in or inside, where the walls are filled with memorabilia from the 1950s. The restaurant is open April-October.

Every Fourth of July, the Winthrop Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce sponsors the Fourth of July fireworks display at Norcross Point on Maranacook Lake. That event draws several hundred into town each year.

There is also a 5K race that day, sponsored by the Friends of the Cobbossee Watershed. It's open to all runners, joggers, and walkers. Most of the course follows the scenic eastern shore of Maranacook Lake. All proceeds are used for conservation of the Cobbossee Watershed. See runsignup.com/Race/ME/Winthrop/FriendsontheFourthAnnual5K for more details.

Painters, potters, photographers, jewelry makers, fabric artists, basket weavers, and fine craftsmen will descend upon downtown Winthrop during the 32nd Winthrop Sidewalk Art Festival on Saturday, Aug. 17, 9 am to 3 pm.

Sponsored by the Winthrop Lakes Region Chamber, the annual summer festival will also offer live music, lobster rolls, homemade pies and other baked goods.

St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Route 135, the United Methodist Church, 58 Main St, and the Winthrop Congregational Church, 10 Bowdoin St., will also hold rummage sales, silent auctions and offer luncheons.

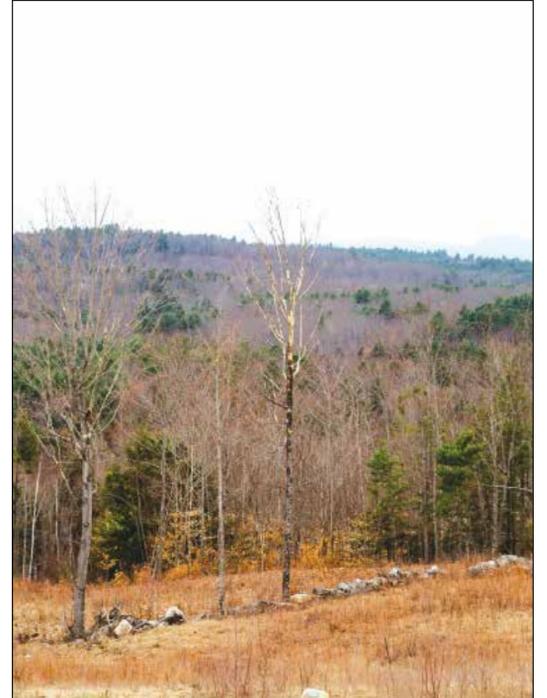
The Bailey Public Library will offer children's activities from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

"The festival has something for everyone," said Chamber Director Barbara Walsh. "Wonderful art, fine crafts, children's activities, live music and delicious food!"

For more information, call 377-8020 or email info@winthrop-chamber.org.



If conserved, this new KLT conservation property will be available for outdoor recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, snowmobiling and blueberry picking. The top of Surry Hill has phenomenal views of the White Mountains and the surrounding hills as well as views of the village of Wayne, Pocasset Lake, Androscoggin Lake and Echo Lake.



Photos courtesy of Kennebec Land Trust

Kennebec Land Trust launches ambitious campaign to conserve 311-acre Surry Hill property in Fayette

BY KENNEBEC LAND TRUST
Special to the KJ

In grocery stores and parks, brew pubs and libraries, residents and visitors to the Kennebec Valley are often heard telling stories about their families, local history, and the land and lakes where they live, work, “summer” and roam the outdoors. Whether you have lived here your whole life, or have just arrived for a short visit, you have likely noted that community ties and the woods and waters that surround us are central to our sense of place.

The Kennebec River, Cobossee Lake, our rural villages and small cities, the Mount Pisgah fire tower, or your secret corner of the woods make our lives richer. The Kennebec Land Trust (KLT) is proud to be part of the community and our landscape. We value downtown Winthrop, where our office is located, the other twenty towns in our service area, the local businesses who are vendors and supporters and the farmers and loggers who work the land and help maintain our region’s heritage.

A new land conservation project has been announced that we hope will enrich the lives of residents and visitors. The proposed Surry Hill Community Forest is a 311-acre property that includes the top of Surry Hill in Fayette. If conserved, this new KLT conservation property will be available for outdoor recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, hunting, snowmobiling and blueberry picking.

The top of Surry Hill has phenomenal views of the White Mountains and the surrounding hills as well as views of the village of Wayne, Pocasset Lake, Androscoggin Lake and Echo Lake. The fields around the hilltop will be maintained for their scenic views and as important habitat for pollinators and many other wildlife species.

As of late April, generous

KLT members and community supporters have already donated \$180,180 towards the Surry Hill Campaign. In order to complete this project by the end of October 2019, we need to raise an additional \$113,000 through private donations and grants.

It is the hope of the Kennebec Land Trust that many who love our lands will consider making a donation to support the Surry Hill Community Forest. All donors to the campaign will receive a complimentary one-year membership to KLT. Secure donations may be made at tklt.org or mail them to The Kennebec Land Trust, PO Box 261, Winthrop, ME 04364. Please contact us with any questions about this property or our land conservation programs, by calling 207-377-2848.

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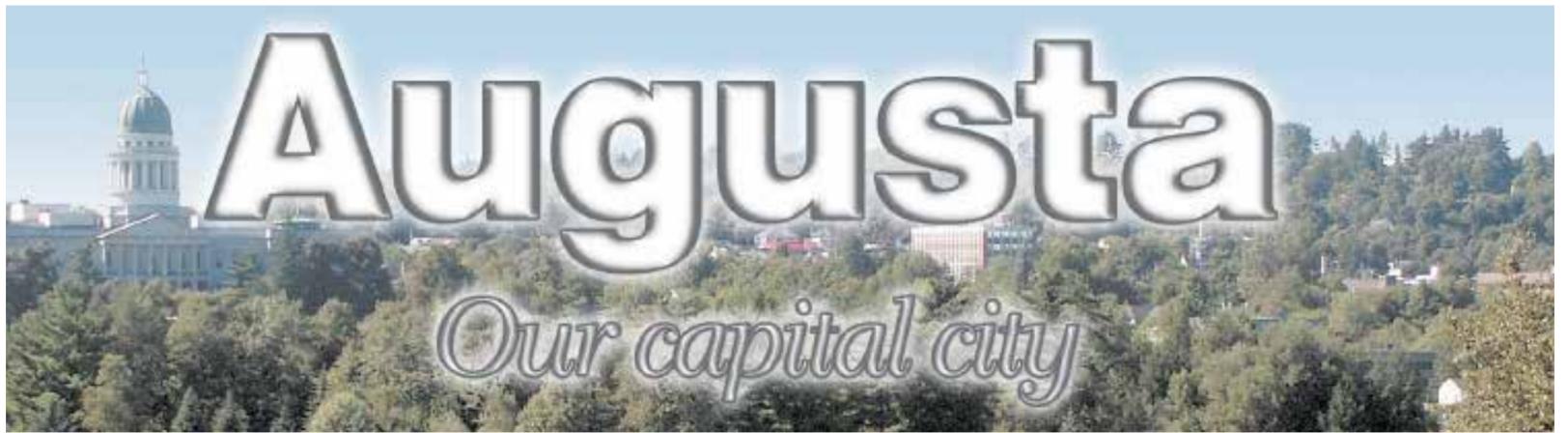
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Kennebec Valley Community College returns to Augusta

BY KENNEBEC VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Special to the KJ

Kennebec Valley Community College has announced the creation of a satellite campus at the Buker Community Center in Augusta. KVCC had previously served more than 200 students at the Buker Center from the fall of 2005 until 2011. In the fall of 2011, the college made a financial decision to leave the Augusta area.

"The Buker Center provided a great space for our students to take classes and opened the door for new enrollment at the College. We are back!" said Karen Normandin, KVCC's VP of Student Affairs, Public Relations and Enrollment Planning.

KVCC has affordable tuition at \$94 per credit hour, trade and healthcare programs that translate into employment, business, general and liberal arts education courses and college credits transferable to four-year programs in the University of Maine System.

The school has contracted to access classroom space with the Buker Center – one science lab, a general classroom and a student lounge space equipped with computers, comfortable seating, tables and, of course, coffee.

"We are hopeful that in the years to come we are able to expand," Normandin said. "We had previously utilized an entire wing encompassing seven or eight rooms accommodating 200-250 students in a given semester. Our goal is to return to this level of space to assist our students."

Having a location in Augusta means that students in the greater Augusta area will have more options for taking KVCC courses without the drive to Fairfield. Some students who live closer to Augusta may find it convenient to pick up an extra



KVCC satellite campus at the Buker Community Center in Augusta.

evening course at the Center, and from time to time, there are University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) students who are able to find classes at Buker that better fit their schedules. These credits are easily transferred to UMA toward the student's degree program.

Kathryn Englehart, KVCC's Dean of Academic Affairs, said the expansion to Augusta now "helps to serve part of our region, especially toward the coast, which has a significant population."

The college hopes to offer a Health Science Certificate that prepares students to transfer into a health program leading to a degree or will allow certificate holders to go directly into entry-level positions in health care.

Other potential offerings are courses in medical assisting and a variety of courses such as math, English and communication that are transferrable to four-year degree programs in liberal arts or business administra-

tion. "For example," Englehart said, "students can take courses in our mental health program and then transfer to UMA after two years and finish with a bachelor's degree. Or, students who take business administration courses at KVCC can then transfer to Thomas College and work toward a four-year degree in Business Administration."

"Small class size in a very student-focused atmosphere, academic and personal support services, and flexible schedules – a great value proposition," said Normandin, "We are so excited to have this opportunity to return to the Augusta area."

Beginning as soon as May 20, KVCC will offer classes in anatomy & physiology I & II and college algebra at the Buker Center location. Stop by the new KVCC location in the Buker Community Center at 27 Armory Street in Augusta. For more information, visit kvcc.me.edu or call us at 453-5822 (KVCC).

Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation announces expanded programming

BY SOUTHERN KENNEBEC CHILD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Special to the KJ

Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation (SKCDC) is a non-profit agency, offering high quality early learning programs throughout Southern Kennebec County. SKCDC serves children and families from birth right up to Kindergarten. With a variety of program options and ten locations, SKCDC offers learning experiences that support school readiness, family engagement and fun.

In addition, SKCDC provides the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to area family child care providers and partners with the Bureau of Highway Safety as an authorized Car Seat Distribution Center with Certified Car Seat Technicians.

Expanded programming now in development will provide additional infant and toddler services in Gardiner, as well as expanded service delivery in the Lake Region program located in South China.

In Gardiner, renovations are underway for a new infant/toddler classroom to provide high-quality, full-day and full-year care. A ramp for accessibility and a new playground will also be added at the Plummer Street location. Funding from the Kennebec Savings Bank Catalyst grant is supporting these efforts.

In South China, the Head Start program will be expanded to serve additional children and will also offer a 6.5 hour, program for children

and families five days a week.

To learn more about SKCDC's high quality early care and education programs, visit the website at skcdc.org or call 1-800-525-2229.

SKCDC RECIEVES KSB CATALYST GRANT

Kennebec Savings Bank recently named Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation as recipient of one of its 2018 Catalyst Grant. The \$30,000 gift is designed to support creative concepts that might otherwise not be possible for the nonprofit organizations.

"We are pleased to provide this funding to a nonprofit that directly impacts the lives of so many in our community," said KSB President and CEO Andrew Silsby.

Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation offers high quality early learning programs for children and their families from birth to Kindergarten. The funds will be used to renovate a classroom, develop an outdoor play space designed for young children and construct a safe exit ramp at their Gardiner location.

"We are so grateful to be awarded the Kennebec Savings Bank Catalyst Grant," said Cristina Salois, Southern Kennebec Child Development Corporation's agency director. "Our child development programs prepare our community's young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. We appreciate the support of Kennebec Savings Bank in these efforts."

SAVE THE DRIVE UP



With KVCC's convenient location at the Buker Center, this means that students in the greater Augusta area will have more options for taking courses without the drive to Fairfield. Students who live closer to Augusta may find it convenient to pick up an extra evening course at the Center, or University of Maine at Augusta (UMA) students might be able to find classes at Buker that better fit their schedules. These credits are easily transferred to UMA toward the student's degree program.

Check out the Summer courses being offered at Buker. Fall course registration is also underway.

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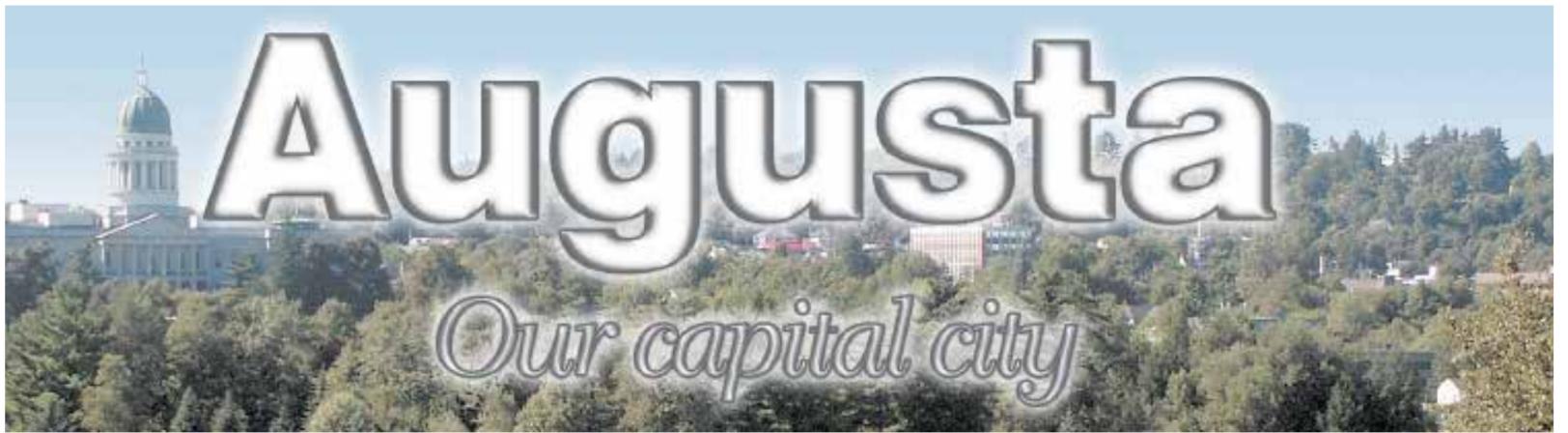


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Goal of the Holocaust and Human Rights Center is educating about dangers of hate and prejudice

BY HOLOCAUST AND HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER
Special to KJ

Charles Rotmil was a hidden child during the Holocaust. He survived. His parents did not. Now Rotmil tells his story to schoolchildren all across Maine each year. He works with a team of educators at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center (HHRC) of Maine. Last school year, the HHRC team reached 3,406 middle and high school students statewide.

Housed at the Michael Klahr Center on the campus of the University of Maine at Augusta, the HHRC is a nonprofit organization founded in 1985 by Holocaust survivors and their allies.

One of the principal founders, Holocaust survivor Gerda Haas, had been appointed to the Maine Board of Education and was deeply disturbed that Holocaust education wasn't being taught in every Maine school. She and other Holocaust survivors made it their mission to go into schools to tell their stories and to assist teachers in Holocaust instruction.

Fast forward almost thirty-five years and many of the Holocaust survivors who settled in Maine after WWII have passed away, but a few – Rotmil who lives in Portland, Rudy Horowitz of Topsham and Edith Lucas Pagelson of Falmouth – are willing and available to share their stories in Maine schools.

On May 17 the HHRC, Rotmil and Pagelson will tell their stories to more than one-thousand middle and high school students at the statewide annual Civil Rights Team Conference at the Augusta Civic Center.

"It's important that we begin a conversation about how to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are taught to the next generation of Maine students," said Shenna Bellows, HHRC Executive

Director. Bellows also serves in the legislature where she is part of an effort to mandate Holocaust education in Maine schools.

"Holocaust history is a vital part of our collective understanding of why hate speech and acts of prejudice are so dangerous."

In addition to providing free workshops in schools, the HHRC welcomes students and the public to the Michael Klahr Center on UMA's campus in Augusta which houses permanent Holocaust exhibits chronicling the stories of survivors like Michael Klahr whom the Center is named. He, like Rotmil, was a hidden child whose parents were murdered in the Holocaust. The HHRC permanent exhibits, which include video and audio components, ensure that Holocaust victims and



survivors are never forgotten.

In addition to exhibits, the Klahr Center boasts a small theater and a large classroom equipped with technology for a variety of presentation media. The HHRC welcomes outside groups to rent the classroom for events ranging from business breakfasts to board meetings.

Recently, the HHRC launched an Allies Breakfast series to explore equity and inclusion. Anti-bias education is part of an expanding mission at the HHRC. As schools grapple with anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, xenophobia and other types of prejudice and discrimination, the HHRC has developed civil rights and anti-bias workshops for students and teachers. Each summer, teachers travel to the Klahr Center for professional development

workshops ranging from immigration to anti-racism. Exhibits at the HHRC under the leadership of Associate Director David Greenham have also expanded to include human rights themes.

"At the heart of our work are real people impacted by historic events and determined to share their stories, so that all of us can learn from them," said Bellows. "For more than thirty years, the HHRC has made it our mission to capture these stories. Using the lessons of the Holocaust and other events past and present, we encourage individuals and communities to reflect and act upon their moral responsibilities to confront prejudice, intolerance and discrimination."

"In these challenging times, there is no more important mission."



Community Connections



Nonprofit organizations serving the areas of Augusta, Gardiner and Winthrop



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A desire to satisfy local love of Mexican food created Lisa's Legit Burritos

BY NANCY MCGINNIS
Correspondent

In 2012, tired of lengthy drives for a burrito fix, Lisa Liberatore opened Lisa's Legit Burritos on Water Street in downtown Gardiner and was so successful that a year later, she opened a second location on Water Street in Augusta.

Her quest, she said, was "to bring Central Maine some fast and fresh Mexican food with the friendliest staff around" – and she's had local lovers of Mexican food rejoicing ever since.

Seven years later, Liberatore remains a silent partner in the business, while new managing partners, Jay and Ehrin Simanski, have brought new energy and exciting developments since first coming on board in August of 2015.

"Lisa came up with an amazing concept, and we've stepped it up a notch, increasing business threefold," says Ehrin Simanski.

Now on the menu in addition to gluten-free, popular vegetarian and vegan options there are sweet potato, butternut squash, jackfruit, dairy-free Daiya "cheese" and Wayfare "sour cream" choices for every taste and diet plan.

Recognizing that "it used to be a diet, but now it's a way of life," Ehrin Simanski notes that their goal is not just to skip or subtract meat from a dish but to make it complete and appealing in its own right.

"We listen to what our customers want, and they are so appreciative!"

Their grilled torta sandwich is another item added thanks to customer suggestions, she explains. Served on a flat ciabatta roll, it can be meat-based, vegetarian or vegan, with layered filling options including cheese, pork or beef, beans, a mayo-based honey-Cajun spread, tomatoes, spinach and guacamole. The latter melts into irresistible, "almost buttery goodness" on the grill, she said.

For those who manage to save room for dessert, there are cheesecake-filled burritos, served cold or grilled; dessert quesadillas featuring chocolate chips or peanut butter and even (vegan) strawberry Oreo sauce.

The couple, now living in Gardiner, met at a car auction and worked many years in the auto business before embarking on this venture.

"We like food better than cars," Ehrin Simanski said laughing, pointing out that nothing compares to getting to see happy, excited people enjoying the couple's Mexican food. A visitor to either location on any day, Monday through Saturday, is more than likely to find one or the other partner on the premises, busy in the kitchen or behind the counter.

Jay Simanski also serves on Gardiner's Parks and Rec Committee. While Erin Simanski is on the board of James Place, the Augusta-based recovery housing. Both are active members of the Augusta Downtown Alliance. They welcome opportunities for the business to participate in community



Recognizing that "it used to be a diet, but now it's a way of life," Ehrin Simanski notes that their goal is not just to skip or subtract meat from a dish but to make it complete and appealing in its own right. In addition to gluten-free, popular vegetarian and vegan options there are sweet potato, butternut squash, jackfruit and dairy-free choices for every taste and diet plan.

events such as the Gardiner Music Walk and ArtWalks.

Most recently, the Simanskis have been busy preparing tamales with homemade guacamole and "cowboy caviar salsa" as Lisa's Legit Burritos' signature dish to contribute to the collaborative Cinco de Mayo celebration May 5 in Augusta.



Nancy McGinnis photos
Jen Cooper, manager of the Gardiner location, creates a burrito to order



The current art exhibit at Monkitree, through May 27, is "Barnyard Portraits" by Barbara Chase. The next show, "Go Quietly Now," features Mike Lewis' paintings, drawings and woodcuts about, as he says, "finding inner quiet . . . peace in fragility and resilience in being."

Photo by Nancy McGinnis
Monkitree, a storefront gallery and fine craft shop at 263 Water Street in downtown Gardiner.

Monkitree offers art and beauty along with pieces selected for pure fun

BY NANCY MCGINNIS
Correspondent

"Art is for everybody," declares Clare Marron, proprietor of Monkitree, a storefront gallery and fine craft shop at 263 Water Street in downtown Gardiner. Nine years ago this month, she opened this space featuring thoughtfully selected art and craft ranging from whimsical to elegant, profound to just plain funny.

"I do have a broad view of art," Marron allows. "To anyone who says they're 'not into art,' I would argue that everyone is attracted to something they find beautiful, whether it's a Harley, or maybe a boat . . . or a painting, or a piece of jewelry. I can't tell you how many times people have looked at the bars of Maine Naturals Soaps on display and said, 'These are so beautiful!'"

And mugs, platters, garlic roasters and whisky stones are among the both aesthetically pleasing and functional, sometimes playful, and always sought after pieces created by Mary Kay Spencer of The Potter's House, found at Monkitree.

Her business' growth has been a deliberate, slow trajectory, says Marron. The fact that she chose to start out, and has consciously stayed, small has allowed her to bring in an eclectic variety from which to choose, she adds. Not buying in large quantities allows for constant change, and makes every trip to Monkitree a fresh experience for her customers.

Marron says those customers tend to fall into three categories: locals, who come in regularly in search of a birthday or wedding gift, other folks "who got off the highway to grab a bite to eat, and happened to find me," and the loyal summer people who are excited to return each year, making Monkitree a much-anticipated part of their Maine tradition.

While Marron carries some work by artists and artisans who happen to be based far afield, such as stained glass made in Vermont and pottery from Colorado, she currently has about 80 Maine artists and craftspeople represented in her shop.

About half of them live close enough to pop in fairly regularly with new items, or just to say hi, she says. Over the course of its nine-year history, Monkitree has featured as many as 200 Maine artists and makers.

The current art exhibit at Monkitree, through May 27, is "Barnyard Portraits" by Barbara Chase. The next show, "Go Quietly Now," features Mike Lewis' paintings, drawings and woodcuts about, as he says, "finding inner quiet . . . peace in fragility and resilience in being."

Marron describes herself as an appreciator, rather than an artist or maker herself. But on second thought, she reflects: "there's an art to curating this space – in setting up a show or a display to best represent the creator of the work."

Marron, who owns the building and lives above Monkitree, is strongly committed to sustainable communities and working together to strengthen and preserve downtown Gardiner. Shopping locally has more impact than some people realize, she says.

"When I wanted to make renovations to improve this property, I hired a local carpenter, plumber and electrician," she points out. When artists come by to drop off their work, they may also stop at the Coop or the A-1 Diner for a bite to eat. She doesn't just pay property taxes; Marron also tries to support local causes when she can, and she chairs the Gardiner Main Street (GMS) promotions team, as well as serving on the GMS Board.

"Right now," she says, "my hours are 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Saturdays. Part of the reason for the earlier closing on some days is so that I can participate in Gardiner Main Street meetings and also to attend business networking events. I plan to switch to 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays in June. And if anyone would like to come outside of my regular hours, they should feel free to contact me. If they find themselves in town on a Monday, I'm happy to open if I can."

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“By the end of our current season, running from September 2018 through June of 2019, we will have offered 50 shows – thirteen of them sold out! And welcomed almost 4,000 visitors.”

MICHAEL MICLON, EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR JOHNSON HALL



Johnson Hall is flourishing now while looking at expansion

BY NANCY MCGINNIS
Correspondent

Excitement is unmistakably in the air at Johnson Hall, a historic downtown Gardiner landmark that has stood at 280 Water Street since 1846. Maine’s oldest opera house, Johnson Hall has taken on new life as a performing arts center, showcasing topnotch music, theater and other forms of entertainment for residents and visitors from central Maine and way beyond. All this is happening in the small but vibrant first floor space.

A major capital campaign is currently under way, with more than \$3 million representing well more than half the necessary fundraising in place, thanks to significant support from major donors including the Gardiner family and Kennebec Savings Bank.

The goal is to complete renovations to the second and third floors of the building in order to create a state of the art, accessible 400-seat theater as well as an attractive venue for community gatherings, business meetings and small conferences.

Even with only the first floor available, “we’re enjoying the most well-attended year in the past three decades,” said Michael Miclon, who has been leading the effort since he came on board as Johnson Hall’s executive/artistic director six years ago this month.

“By the end of our current season, running from September 2018 through June of 2019, we will have offered 50 shows – thirteen of them sold out! And welcomed almost 4,000 visitors.”

The profile of Johnson Hall has been rising by leaps and bounds, he said, since the days not that long ago, when a mere dozen shows a year

drawed a total of 450 attendees and many folks questioned why Johnson Hall needed to expand when it was not filling the theater.

Now, it’s become abundantly clear that “the mission of Johnson Hall is all about excellence,” said Miclon, “and the next stage – no pun intended – once we get the upstairs theater in place, will be to curate aspiring performers working on their craft in the downstairs space.”

Nothing succeeds like success. According to online ticket sales, recent Johnson Hall audiences have come from 116 Maine towns and cities as well as 25 other states, and even Mexico and Canada.

Beyond Water Street, Johnson Hall’s initiative to bring artists into the local schools has flourished since it was launched in 2014, introducing young audiences to a diverse line-up of great performers. And the outreach extends to the entire community and beyond with the summer Waterfront Concert Series, now in its fourth year, attracting a total of about 3,500 attending the ten free performances held on Friday evenings by the Kennebec River.

A complete listing of upcoming performances, as well as more information about the summer concert series and other Johnson Hall offerings such as their SPARK Theater Camp for kids, can be found by visiting johnsonhall.org or calling 512-7144. Performance tickets can be purchased online or through the box office, open Tuesday through Friday from 12 noon - 3 p.m.

The mission of the Johnson Hall Performing Arts Center is to promote, create and inspire artistic excellence through the presentation of world-class entertainment and professional performing arts education and to drive cultural and economic growth for our community.



Nancy McGinnis photos

Described as a “Poet of the Stage – an eye-popping visual artist and a virtuoso mime,” Michael Cooper is a great example of the variety and caliber of the offerings at Johnson Hall. Cooper has hand-created these exquisite farm animal masks, and a number of others, to use in his one-man creative memoir and fond tribute to his late dad, a Maine veterinarian. He’ll return to Johnson Hall on May 25 for a different, but equally memorable performance, as “The Masked Marvel”.



Don’t overlook Manchester

The little town with a lot of day trip opportunities

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Many visitors to the Capitol Region think first of going to Augusta’s Maine State Museum or the Children’s Museum, but nearby Manchester also has a lot for families and adults to see and do. It, too, should be part of any day trip itinerary in Central Maine. Manchester offers restaurants, shopping, family-friendly activities, and group or individual experiences, just to name a few.

SHOPPING

In the mood for shopping? Start your day trip with a stop at Longfellow’s Greenhouses. Longfellow’s is one of the top greenhouses in New England because of their great customer service and advice for a wide range of plants, flowers and decorations for your garden. Kids and adults love the Longfellow’s gift shop full of home and garden gifts, gardening supplies and gardening tools for women, men and children. Open year-round, Longfellow’s is the perfect place to find the best plants for spring, summer, fall or winter but it is also a great place to learn how to garden. The family-owned business offers a wide range of community events on their website at longfellowsgreenhouses.com.

After your journey through Longfellow’s, don’t miss the wide variety of boats at Clark Marine (clarkmarine.com), right next door. Clark Marine’s lot is full of new and pre-owned boats, including the latest models. Simply walking around and looking at the boats, docks and accessories is worth the trip, not to mention the service you receive when you come with your boat in tow.

If you are more of a crafter than a boat enthusiast, Stained Glass Express is for you. Stained Glass Express does not just sell all the materials needed for making stained glass art, but also has a wide variety of jewelry-making supplies, lamp kits, books and patterns, and gift cards. Learn more at stainedglassexpress.com.

You can’t go on a day trip without stopping for a bite to eat. The Lighthouse Wine & Seafood Shop (lighthousewineandseafood.com) is a great place to stop for a quick meal in Manchester. The Lighthouse offers up gourmet meals, as well as fine cheese, wines and seafood to take home. The Lighthouse also hosts monthly wine and beer tastings.

FUN WITH THE FAMILY

Lakeside Orchards (lakesideorchards.com) is perfect for a family outing. On a day trip to Manchester, Lakeside offers apple picking in the fall, views of apple blossoms in the spring and fresh baked goods year-round. Lakeside is fantastic for kids who can have fun picking apples, exploring the orchard and getting a sweet treat from the bakery.

Speaking of sweet treats, how about some ice cream? Fielder’s Choice Ice Cream (fielderschoiceicecream.com) offers large portions of homemade ice cream with a baseball theme. Visiting Fielder’s choice has become a tradition for many Maine families on opening day. Kids will love the sundaes named after baseball pitches, positions and innings as they enjoy their delicious Manchester-made sweets.



After enjoying some Fielder’s Choice ice cream, the kids can release some of their extra energy right across the road at Castle Town Playground. With swings, slides, a sandbox and more, they can enjoy hours of play at Castle Town. Surrounded by trees, parents can rest in the shade while their kids have fun on the playground. Check out their Facebook page.

QUALITY ME TIME

If you need some time for yourself or with your friends, Manchester offers things to do for many different interests. One option is to take a hike on the Jamie’s Pond Trail, maintained by Kennebec Land Trust. Jamie’s

More MANCHESTER, PAGE 8

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At Dave's Appliance knowledgeable employees make a difference

BY WANDA CURTIS
Correspondent

One of the fast growing industries in the U.S. and worldwide is the home appliance industry. The authors of the website *mordorintelligence.com* report that, "the global home appliances market is experiencing steady growth with the growing middle-class economy, improved disposable income levels in a number of countries and the availability of a range of home appliances at competitive prices."

The global home appliances market was valued at \$174.07 billion USD in 2017, according to the website, and is projected to reach \$203.37 billion USD by the end of 2023.

Some of the most costly purchases that every homeowner will make, aside from homes and automobiles, are home appliances. Washers, dryers, stoves and refrigerators can range in price from \$350 to several thousand dollars. That's why it's important to research these products and find knowledgeable sales people who can help with making the right purchase.

Dave's Appliance (located at 59 Central Street in Winthrop) employs more than 40 people, some of whom are fourth generation family members of the original owners. Their employees are trained and able to assist customers in selecting the best appliances for their home.

The original owners Dave Ketchen and his wife Denise closed their Western Auto franchise store in 1977 and opened Dave's Appliance. Their sons Brian and Scott Ketchen now manage the store. Ketchen said that his parents closed the Western Auto franchise store to focus specifically on appliances and electronics.

"We've been in business 42 years," said Brian Ketchen. "We have a knowledgeable staff. We have a lot of combined experience."

According to their website, Dave's is a member of the New England Group buying consortium which offers them the advantage of multi-million dollar buying power and enables them to keep their prices competitive with other national retailers. Consumers who visit Dave's, from all across the state and online, can find a huge selection of home appliances. Some of

"We've been in business 42 years. We have a knowledgeable staff. We have a lot of combined experience."

BRIAN KETCHEN, DAVE'S APPLIANCE



Contributed photo

Dave's Appliance offers a large selection of kitchen appliances, as well as washers and dryers.

the brand names include A.O Smith, Amana, Aqua Thrift, Avanti, Bosch, Cafe, Whirlpool, Maytag, GE, Speed Queen, Frigidaire, KitchenAid, LG, Fujitsu, Thermador, Unique, Ventahood, Viking, Weber, Broan, Napoleon BBQ, Sharp, Smeg and Electrolux. They also sell a variety of air conditioners, heaters, humidifiers and dehumidifiers. They sell and install Fujitsu, Mitsubishi and Daikin heat pumps. They also sell gas grills, professional grills, charcoal grills and electric grills.

Brian Ketchen said their customers include not only individual homeowners but also commercial clients such as hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities. He said that, in addition to their walk-in customers, they do a lot of

telephone sales and deliver appliances throughout the state of Maine including many deliveries to coastal areas like Boothbay Harbor, Rockland and Camden. They've also traveled to Sugar Loaf, Rangeley, Greenville and as far as Moosehead.

Another advantage of shopping at Dave's Appliance, said Brian Ketchen, is that they service the products they sell and that sets them apart from many other businesses in the area that sell but not many service their products. Dave's also has a parts department.

Dave's Appliance is open Monday-Friday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

For more information, call (800) 298-8858 or visit davesappliancemaine.com.

Free addiction treatment to uninsured offered by Winthrop Addiction Specialists

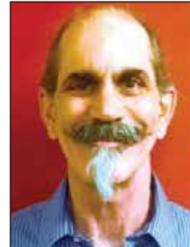
BY WANDA CURTIS
Correspondent

As Maine's opioid epidemic continues to claim about one life per day from overdoses, state officials and health-care professionals continue to look for solutions. One reason that some individuals may have succumbed to the epidemic is that they couldn't afford treatment. In response to this problem, Dr. Richard Fein, decided to open a treatment center in Winthrop where individuals without insurance can get help for their opiate addiction. Fein secured a grant which enables him to treat opiate addiction free of charge for individuals who don't have the ability to pay. He also treats persons who are covered under Maine Care.

Fein estimates there are probably hundreds of people in Central Maine and thousands in the entire state who need treatment. He's been involved in treating opiate addiction for about 15 years. He was employed at Sheepscot Valley Health Center in Coopers Mills where he treated patients experiencing opiate addiction with the medication Suboxone. He also treated patients for opiate addiction at the Family Medicine Institute in Augusta.

"While both at Sheepscot Valley Health Center and at FMI, it was clear to me that this treatment was something that needed to happen," said Fein. "I perhaps saw one-hundred or more people at these two places together. This told me that the need was great."

The practice that Fein recently opened in Winthrop involves a team approach. The staff there consists of Fein, nurse Lisa Miller, counselor Julie Hopkins



Dr. Richard Fein



Nurse Lisa Miller and receptionist Crystal Gilks

LCPC/CAD and receptionist, Crystal Gilks.

Fein said that it's not enough to just treat addictions with medication. He said that counseling is also very important.

"Without counseling we are just spinning our wheels," said Fein. "Providing someone with only medication assisted treatment (MAT) is like giving them a chance to change, without giving them the tools. I want to give people everything they need to make a change."

According to Hopkins, people with addictions (such as opiate addiction) develop not only profound physiological dependence upon substances but also emotional dependence upon it. She said, "This is why we emphasize the importance of learning new coping skills; when people are overwhelmed with strong and often painful emotions, they turn to their substance

of choice to deal with those feelings. They need to learn how to tolerate and manage emotions without the use of substances."

Hopkins said that people need to find ways to experience and express their feelings in a manner that doesn't damage their recovery or relationships. She said that, "Coping skills can include journaling, exercise, talking to a reliable support person or turning to spiritual or religious beliefs. Finding out what works for each person is part of the work of recovery."

The Addiction Specialists practice is located at 2540 U.S. Route 202 in Winthrop. Any person experiencing opiate addiction who is uninsured can call 395-5445 to ask about the treatment program or to schedule an appointment. Persons covered by Maine Care are also welcome to seek treatment there.



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Manchester

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Pond's shoreline is undeveloped, making for picturesque views of the lake from the trail. The pond's trails vary in difficulty and are clearly marked. A hike on the Jamie's Pond Trail is a fantastic way to explore nature in the Kennebec Valley region.

Another option that could fit perfectly into a day trip to Manchester is planning for a girlfriends' outing for a mani-pedi at Mahala's Day Spa (mahaladayspa.com). In addition to nails, Mahala's provides massages, hair services, skin care treatments and other forms of relaxation. After visiting Mahala's, you will feel refreshed and ready to take on the day.

If tranquility and relaxation is a bit too mellow for you, try a cardio workout class or play a game of hoops at the Kennebec Valley YMCA (kvyymca.org). You don't even need a YMCA membership to participate. With a day-pass, you can take a cardio fitness class to get your blood pumping and your heart racing or use the courts for a quick game of basketball.

Golfing at the Augusta Country Club (augustacountryclub.org) is another recreational attraction in Manchester. Don't be confused, Augusta Country Club is located in Manchester and is one of Maine's premiere 18-hole golf courses. The golf course and driving range are open to the public. To enjoy a day on the links, be sure to call ahead for tee times and rates. The club also offers a variety of membership options.

With so many places to visit in Manchester, you will need more than one day-trip to fit it all in.

Top 10 Things to Do on a Day Trip to Manchester

1. Visit Longfellow's Greenhouses to shop for plants, gardening supplies, and delightful gifts.
2. Check out the boats at Clark Marine.
3. Pick up crafting supplies at Stained Glass Express.
4. Pick up one of the best lobster rolls around...and a bottle of fine wine at the Lighthouse Wine & Seafood Shop.
5. Go for a hike on the Jamie's Pond Trail maintained by Kennebec Land Trust.
6. Visit Lakeside Orchards for their farm store and apple picking in fall.
7. Lift weights and get a workout at the Kennebec Valley YMCA.
8. Get an ice cream sundae at Fielder's Choice.
9. Have a mani-pedi at Mahala's Day Spa.
10. Explore the Castle Town Playground with the kids!

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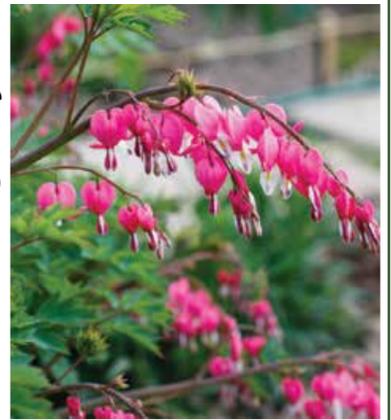
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